

## Agenda for Church-wide Meeting on April 14th

**David Roots** - Brief Intro

**Scott Rishel** - Brief Overview of Exploratory Committee

**All** - Introduction of Committee Members, briefly state name, years of membership, areas of involvement in church, etc.

**Adam Wood** - Review Primary Factors & Criteria (see attached page 1)

**Scott Rishel** - Review Comparison Chart (see attached page 2)

**Andy Long** - Review Important Upcoming Dates (see attached page 3)

**Scott Rishel** - Open to questions, Scott will facilitate requesting various committee members to answer questions

**Glenda Hull** - closure and final encouragement to send questions and feedback to committee via church email.

# Proverbs 3:5-6 (CSB)

<sup>5</sup>Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not rely on your own  
understanding;  
<sup>6</sup>in all your ways know him,  
and he will make your paths straight.

## DO THESE THINGS FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE:

1. Pray without ceasing
2. Rely on trustworthy sources
3. Engage in dialogue rather than conflict
4. Stay focused on discipleship

## PRAYER OPPORTUNITY

Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> - 11:00<sub>AM</sub>  
at Camp Wesley Pines

[www.mississippi-umc.org/generalconference](http://www.mississippi-umc.org/generalconference)

[www.mississippi-umc.org/delegationhub](http://www.mississippi-umc.org/delegationhub)

Twitter | X : @Mississippi\_UMC

Facebook: @TheMississippiUMC

@BishopSharmaDLewis

## Primary Factors and Criteria

### 1. Sound unwavering Biblical Doctrine

- Follow Biblical truths in teachings and beliefs based on Wesleyan (Methodist) Theology
- A welcoming church to all that exudes God's grace and love by upholding Biblical Truths

### 2. No Trust Clause

- All property belongs entirely to local church
- Local property cannot be leveraged against local church

### 3. Connectional in association with other likeminded churches, both near and abroad

- Support and accountability (pastors and congregation)
- Structure already in place

### 4. High level of local church input and decision making

- Pastoral appointments
- Financial spending
- Ability to establish church leadership

### 5. Smooth transition process from UMC

- Something the congregation can relate to
- Familiar church culture, theology, worship practice, etc.

Denominational Comparison						
Denomination	Doctrine	Connectional	Trust Clause	Major Church Decisions		
				Bishops/Clergy	Financials	Structure
United Methodist	Wesleyan, lack of accountability enforcing current doctrine	<u>Near</u> : 86 churches in Seashore District <u>Abroad</u> : 13 million members globally, 6.2 million in US, 30,000 churches	<b>Yes</b> local church holds property for conference	<b>Bishops</b> : Elected for life <b>Clergy</b> : Yearly appointed by Bishop/DS, some congregational input	<b>Apportionments</b> 7% - 15% of budget (varies by annual conf.) Bulk of Mission spend decided by AC & GC	Directed by Book of Discipline, little local discretion
Global Methodist	Wesleyan, robust accountability	<u>Near</u> : 31 churches on Coast <u>Abroad</u> : approximately 400,000 members and growing, 4,500 churches, just under 170 churches in MS	<b>No</b>	<b>Bishops</b> : Elected for a term (TBD at convening GC, likley 12 year limit) <b>Clergy</b> : Appointed by Bishops/DS, but w/more congregational input and pastoral agreement.	<b>Apportionments</b> 2% of operating income, with a 6.5% cap <b>Financials</b> : Missions and local spend allows greater input by congregation	Local Church has the ability to determine structure if established in bylaws, otherwise the default structure is outlined in the Transitional Book of Doctrines and Disciplines.
Free Methodist	Wesleyan	<u>Near</u> : Closest church is Waynesboro, MS <u>Abroad</u> : 77,000 members in US, 1,050 churches.	<b>Yes</b> , local church holds property for conference; property transferring in is exempt	<b>Bishops</b> : Elected to a 4 year term, re-electable <b>Clergy</b> : Appinted by Ministerial appointment committee chaired by Bishop	<b>Apportionments</b> 10%-13% of previous year's income	Guided by Book of Discipline
Wesleyan	Wesleyan	<u>Near</u> : closest church is Byram, MS. <u>Abroad</u> : 125,000 members, 1,500 churches in US	<b>Yes</b> , local church holds property for conference	<b>Bishop</b> :One General Superintendent, 4 year term, re-electable <b>Clergy</b> : Congregational call syetem	<b>Apportionments</b> 11% of income	Directed by Book of Discipline, little local descretion
Nazarene	Wesleyan	<u>Near</u> : 7 South MS Churches. <u>Abroad</u> : 637,000 members, 181 churches in US.	<b>Yes</b> , local church holds property for conference,	<b>Bishop</b> : Six General Superintendents, 4 year terms, re-electable <b>Clergy</b> : Congregational call system	<b>Apportionments</b> 10% of income, includes pastor's retirement	Directed by the Nazarene International Bylaws
Congregational Methodist	Wesleyan	<u>Near</u> : None in South MS. <u>Abroad</u> : 14,738 members, 181 churches in US	<b>No</b>	<b>Bishop</b> : One President, minimal authority <b>Clergy</b> : Congregational call system	<b>Apportionments</b> Decided by local church	Churches are autonomous over local decisions of ministry and governing
Independent	Has to Be Determined	Over 35,000 churches in US	<b>No</b>	No Bishop, clergy is church repsonsibility	<b>Apportionments</b> None	Varying

## Important Upcoming Dates

**April 23 – May 4<sup>th</sup>** UMC General Conference

**May 6<sup>th</sup>** Special Church Council Meeting to Digest/Review Outcome of UMC General Conference

**May 13<sup>th</sup>** Church Council Meeting – Congregation is encouraged to attend for a formal presentation regarding the outcome of the UMC General Conference

**TBD** 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide Vote – The exact date will be determined by the District Superintendent after general conference and announced at least 10 days in advance (the church has no discretion over the date, a Sunday afternoon was requested, but this could potentially be a weeknight).

**TBD** Church-wide Business Meeting – Immediately after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide vote there will be a separate meeting to discuss how the church will move forward in light of the outcome of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide vote.

**June 20 – 22<sup>nd</sup>** 2024 Session of Mississippi Annual Conference (Jackson, MS)

Ratifying Vote – *If the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide vote passes* the Annual Conference will ratify that decision at some point during the annual conference, from that date a 30-day clock begins to have the transfer of church property back to the local congregation.

**June 30<sup>th</sup>** Effective Date by which the local church is considered “closed” as a United Methodist Church, assuming the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide vote passes.

**July 1<sup>st</sup>** First Day as a non-UMC Church, assuming the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church-wide vote passes.

### Questions, Comments & Feedback

Exploratory Committee Members: Scott Rishel, Adam Wood, Glenda Hull, Nancy Ruff, Jim Merkle, Larry Lewis, Bob Chatham, Carolyn Rhoades, Stephanie Mathes, Richard Gingles, Chris Daniel, Andy Long, Brent Rishel

Contact: We highly encourage you to contact us with any questions, comments and feedback regarding the presentation and options available to our church if the second vote passes. In order for this information to be disseminated to all committee members, we would encourage you to:

**Email:** [firstumclb@gmail.com](mailto:firstumclb@gmail.com) and put Exploratory Committee in the Subject line.

Denominational Resource Links						
	United Methodist	Global Methodist	Free Methodist	Congregational Methodist	Wesleyan	Nazarene
Resource Links	<a href="#">Book Of Discipline &amp; Book Of Resolutions Free Versions   UMC Books   Cokesbury</a>	<a href="#">Transitional-Discipline.pdf (globalmethodist.org)</a>	<a href="#">We Believe - Free Methodist Church USA (fmcusa.org)</a>	<a href="#">Articles of Religion (cm-church.org)</a>	<a href="#">Wesleyan Organization</a>	<a href="#">Home - Church of the Nazarene</a>
	<a href="#">Is The UMC really... ? (Part 2)</a>	<a href="#">Catechism-for-the-Global-Methodist-Church.2023052496.pdf (globalmethodist.org)</a>	<a href="#">2023 Book of Discipline, Free Methodist Church - USA - Free Methodist Church USA (fmcusa.org)</a>	<a href="#">Who We Are (cm-church.org)</a>		
	<a href="#">2024 Proposed Social Principles</a>		<a href="#">The-Free-Methodist-Way-FINAL.pdf (fmcusa.org)</a>			
			<a href="#">Microsoft Word - FMCUSA Affiliation Process - General Audience.docx</a>			